

From: Aaron
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/17/01 11:02pm
Subject: Microsoft case antitrust settlement

I am very disappointed with the current proposed settlement of the Microsoft case.

The current settlement does nothing to prevent Microsoft from using their monopoly power as they have in the past and as they continue to do. In the current setup, there is no way for other parties to compete with MS. MS is free to give away software, and ever preload it, to compete with 3rd party software like they did with IE to beat down Netscape.

The big problem here is that there is already a monopoly, and due to this there is no way for competitors to get footing. What really needs to take place is for Microsoft to be split into 2, or even 3, different companies.

This would split off the OS side from the apps side. In this day and age, both MS office and Windows have a near stranglehold on the market. If another OS was to start taking off, Microsoft could either not make an office suite for that product that wasn't as good as the same on different platforms, or could delay shipping a version of office. Both of these would cause the competing platform to not gain as much ground as they need. Microsoft has made 2nd rate versions of Office in the past for the Mac (version 4.2.1) along with constantly changing file formats so that Office documents on a Mac aren't compatible with those on the PC. Or as seen with Linux, an OS which they haven't made a version of Office for, while they likely would if the apps department was a separate company from the OS side of thing.

Likewise, if a competitor to MS Office started taking marketshare away, MS could just change the way the OS works, or not release info needed for 3rd party products. This too is something that MS has done in the past for several different competing products, and is something that has come up on several occasions in this trial.

Another section that should possibly be separated from the rest of the company is the networking tools. This would include IE and other network related apps. IMO this could stay part of the Apps group, but should be considered if MS claims that IE should go with the OS.

I hope that some of the input from the public is used to decide how this case is decided, though I am leery of the DOJ listening too much to the quantity, since it has come out that MS has sent in support letters for themselves in the past, some from real people but a lot from people that no longer exist. Also, MS has been shown to be spending a lot of money lobbying, and I would hate to see them buy themselves out of this case and not get punished for using monopolistic powers.

Thanks for listening

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